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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 06/11/09

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ARTICLES:

(1) Japan, U.S. praise "strong resolution" against North Korea; not much new and not much expectations on effectiveness

JIIJI.COM (Full)
11:44, June 11, 2009

New York, Jiji Press, June 10

The Japanese and U.S. governments claimed on June 10 that the resolution against North Korea agreed upon by seven nations, including Japan and the U.S., is "very strong and appropriate." (U.S. ambassador to the UN Susan Rice) However, there is not much new in the draft proposals, which exclude the option of using force, and if North Korea continues with its provocations, a news response will be an issue in the future.

Ambassador Yukio Takasu stressed on June 10 that the objective of the resolution is to make the existing Resolution 1817 on sanctions against the DPRK "effective." The new draft resolution provides for steps to reinforce the monitoring of the implementation of sanctions, such as by creating a seven-member experts' committee.

Takasu went into details on the six provisions on the key issue of cargo inspection, explaining that if permission is not granted for ship inspection on the open seas, the flag state of the ship in question is obliged to direct the ship to an appropriate port. On financial sanctions, new provisions will be added on prohibiting

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loans and aid to the DPRK and blocking the transfer of funds relating to nuclear development.

However, Resolution 1817 already includes provisions on cargo inspection and financial sanctions, albeit not as comprehensive. Furthermore, a similar menu of sanctions can also be found in the sanction resolution against Iran for its nuclear development. The two resolutions are similar in their objective of preventing nuclear proliferation and exclusion of the option of using force. The new resolution on North Korea will also be in the same league.

A diplomatic source pointed out that sanction resolutions focused on nuclear proliferation tend to be similar in their contents, lamenting the "lack of ideas" on completely new sanctions.

(2) Chief Cabinet Secretary positive about submitting possible "new law" on DPRK ship inspection to current Diet session

YOMIURI ONLINE (Full)
12:47, June 11, 2009

At a news conference on June 11, Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura indicated that the government will study domestic legislations for the inspection of cargo on North Korean ships in light of the imminent adoption of a sanction resolution against the DPRK by the UN Security Council.

Kawamura said: "We also need to study domestic legislations," indicating that either a new law will be drawn up or amendments to the ship inspection operations law will be considered. He also indicated that a new law may possibly be considered and said that "it is fully possible" that the bill may be submitted to the current Diet session.

Meanwhile, with regard to Japan's imposing tougher sanctions of its own, Kawamura said that: "The question of unilateral sanctions is certain to come up. For example, the question of (complete ban on) exports or (regulation) of two-way travel will probably be discussed," indicating that these will be studied simultaneously (with ship inspection).

(3) Be prepared for the "Obama shock" in North Korean policy

ASAHI (Page 19) (Full)

June 11, 2009

Young C. Kim, professor emeritus at George Washington University

I think both North Korea's series of missile launches and its nuclear test will not result in any change in the Obama administration's basic stance on resolving the North Korean nuclear issue through dialogue and negotiations, namely, the Six-Party Talks or bilateral negotiations. The DPRK will persist in refusing to return to the Six-Party Talks, reinforcing its nuclear and missile capabilities, and aiming at being recognized as a nuclear power.

The question is how the U.S. and North Korea will deal with each other's demands. It is impossible that the U.S. government will agree to normalization of diplomatic ties, signing a peace agreement, and supplying light-water reactors without the DPRK's denuclearization. It is also unthinkable that the U.S. government will accept a "change in its hostile policy," which, in effect,

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would mean the disintegration of the U.S.-ROK alliance. On the other hand, it is also unlikely that North Korea will agree to complete and verifiable removal of its nuclear capability. It is improbable that the DPRK, which is facing threats to the very survival of its regime and grappling with a serious crisis, including the problem of succession of power, will accept the U.S.' conditions. It is North Korea's position that the nuclear issue can be discussed among the four nuclear powers, the U.S., China, Russia, and itself.

Although the U.S. government has stated repeatedly that it is aiming at the complete and verifiable removal of the DPRK's nuclear arsenal without recognizing it as a nuclear power, the methodology has remained unclear. While it is not impossible to find a compromise through summit talks, America at present lacks the determination to do everything it can to resolve the problem. The Obama administration's policy toward North Korea has not been established. I think for now, it will not reward the North's provocative actions, will impose tougher sanctions, and will implement a policy of "dialogue and pressure" to press the DPRK to return to the negotiating table. However, in the future, the Obama administration may shift to an appeasement policy under certain conditions for reasons such as the desire to prevent nuclear proliferation and mass production of plutonium, the lack of a better option, or the desire to prevent North Korea from becoming violent or starting a war.

If the Obama administration takes action deviating from its principle of seeking verifiable nuclear abandonment without recognizing the DPRK as a nuclear power, this would be a serious development, damaging the credibility of the Japan-U.S. alliance. The Japanese government is probably studying all possible responses to such an "Obama shock."

In any case, the Japanese government, in the first place, should be actively involved with discussions toward the goal of the denuclearization of North Korea, which has a critical impact on Japan's security, by using the Six-Party Talks and all other relevant forums. It should declare to the international community its willingness to take up an appropriate share of the responsibility. This means that Japan should participate in energy and economic aid to the DPRK, regardless of the abduction issue. Furthermore, it should respond positively to the creation of a new framework or negotiation mechanism to replace the Six-Party Talks and engage in comprehensive talks for Japan-DPRK normalization after a certain cooling off period. At the same time, it should implement more systematic and aggressive diplomacy toward the United States to coordinate policies with the Obama administration in a direction beneficial to Japan's national interest.

With regard to the abduction issue, on condition of a firm commitment between the Japanese and DPRK governments to a final solution at the time of normalization of diplomatic relations, both governments should first make honest efforts at implementing humanitarian measures for the families of the victims - such as resumption of investigations along with inviting the victims' families to the DPRK, North Korea's apology to a Japanese mission to Pyongyang, briefings on the investigation of facts, and proposals

for compensation.

(4) Aso shows understanding to LDP proposals calling for possession of enemy-base strike capability

SANKEI ONLINE (Abridged)

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12:53, June 11, 2009

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) National Defense Division defense policy subcommittee chairman Hiroshi Imazu and others met with Prime Minister and LDP President Taro Aso at 11 a.m. at party headquarters. In the session, the group presented Aso with a set of proposals regarding the National Defense Program Outlines that call, among other things, for the possession of the capability to strike enemy bases. In response, Aso reportedly expressed a willingness to consider the option based on the results of a blue-ribbon panel.

According to a person who attended the meeting, the Prime Minister showed understanding to the option of possessing enemy-base strike capabilities, saying, "We must be fully aware that there is a country near Japan that is trying to possess nuclear weapons in the near future."

The group led by Imazu also reported Policy Research Council Chairman Kosuke Hori on the proposals and asked for an increase in defense spending, which has been curtailed over the last several years. Hori showed understanding to the government's plan to treat defense spending separately from other areas, such as security, in its 2009 basic economic and fiscal policy guidelines.

(5) FX selection thrown into confusion

ASAHI (Page 3) (Full)
June 10, 2009

The government is in the process of selecting the fighter experimental (FX), or the follow-on fighter jet model, for the Air Self-Defense Force. This process, however, is now becoming confused prior to the revising of the government's midterm defense buildup plan late this year. The Defense Ministry has forgone FX selection due to the domestic circumstances in the United States. Even so, the F-22, a U.S.-developed state-of-the-art stealth fighter that the Defense Ministry wants the most, is now about to be dropped from the list. On the other hand, the Defense Ministry is under the gun, facing an unusual complaint from the domestic defense industry about its sad plight. "If the confusion is drawn out," a defense contractor says, "Japan may lose the production base of its defense industry at home." The government will be urged to select the final FX candidate model from among its limited choices.

The Defense Ministry sees the F-22 as the best choice. The F-22 is an outstanding stealth fighter that is hardly detectable to radar and has multiple roles for air supremacy, ground attacks, and other functions. The F-22 is "the strongest fighter," according to an ASDF staff officer.

The FX selection has been affected by the United States' circumstances. In 2007, the U.S. Congress decided to embargo the F-22, since it was concerned about the outflow of its advanced military technology. Japan asked the United States to provide F-22 data. Washington, however, did not comply with Tokyo's request for information disclosure. In April, the Obama administration, driven to review the federal government's defense budget, announced its decision to discontinue F-22 procurement. As it stands, the United States is now almost certain to stop F-22 production. The F-22 is priced at about 14 billion yen for the U.S. Air Force. Even if the U.S. Congress approves F-22 exports to Japan, the F-22's per unit price is estimated to be over 30 billion yen, with its development

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cost and other costs added up.

Even so, the Defense Ministry still has a glimmer of hope for the F-22. In the United States, budget-compiling authority belongs to Congress. There are now moves within the U.S. Congress seeking to continue F-22 production for job security, and the U.S. Congress may override the Obama administration's F-22 decision. This is why the Defense Ministry has yet to given up on the F-22. Apparently, Japan is lobbying the U.S. Congress, as well.

In May, when Defense Minister Hamada visited the United States, he told Secretary of State Gates that Japan wanted to introduce the F-22. Gates, however, asked Hamada to consider the F-35, which is the follow-on mainstay fighter. The F-35 is a high-performance fighter jet that is on a par with the F-22. However, the F-35 is still under development. Even if Japan can be second to U.S. forces in introducing F-35s, its F-35 introduction will be in the mid 2010s. If that is the case, it will be too late for Japan because the ASDF's F-4 fighter jets, currently deployed as the ASDF's mainstay fighters, will have become too old by then.

The situation is now becoming muddled. Meanwhile, other U.S. and European manufacturers are now on the move. The most enthusiastic one is Britain's BAE Systems, a point of contact for the Eurofighter, which is a fighter jet co-developed by four European countries. BAE Systems has been getting in touch with Japanese aircraft manufacturers as well, making it a 'sales point' to approve licensed production in Japan and technological transfer to Japan.

However, the Defense Ministry has not adopted any European fighter planes. The ASDF is voicing concern about European fighters from the perspective of maintenance and other factors. In addition, there are cautious views within the government. "We need to study this matter from the perspective of maintaining Japan's alliance with the United States," one official said.

The Boeing Company, a U.S.-based aircraft manufacturer, has deep ties with the ASDF. In March, Boeing announced the F-15SE Silent Eagle, which is based on the F-15E as the F-15FX. The F-15E has high ground attack capability, and its upgrade version is the F-15SE, which is a new stealth fighter model. So far, the two Boeing-recommended fighter models have been underdog candidates. "The design concept is old and their stealth performance is low," an ASDF staff officer said. However, Boeing will approve the F-15SE's licensed production and technological transfer.

The question is whether or not licensed production can be granted to Japan. In fact, this point is a matter of life or death for Japan's defense industry.

There are two ways to procure fighter planes from abroad: manufacturing at home under a license and importing them. However, the ASDF's fighter planes have been seamlessly produced at home mainly on a licensed production basis for over 50 years. That is because the know-how for manufacturing fighter planes is defense infrastructure that cannot be acquired in a short period of time when that is needed.

However, the FX selection has now been thrown into confusion. F-2 production is timetabled to end up with its last one in 2011. After that, Japan's next production of fighter planes cannot be expected. It is almost certain that Japan's domestic production of fighter

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planes will cease for the first time in the postwar period.

The F-22 uses a number of secret technologies. If Japan chooses a leading-edge fighter jet model like the F-22, Japan will likely have to import finished fighter jets. "The domestic aircraft industry may pull out of the defense sector," says Shinichi Kiyotani, a journalist on military affairs.

Japan produces fighter planes with the support of about 1,200 companies. These domestic companies have specially skilled engineers and maintain their production lines. An executive from Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Japan's largest aircraft manufacturer, says: "Our manufacturing know-how in the defense sector is like traditional arts. This know-how, once lost without being handed down, cannot be

retrieved ever again."

The Society of Japanese Aerospace Companies (SJAC), which is made up of aircraft manufacturers, conducted a questionnaire survey of its members in private over the FX issue. SJAC tabulated findings from that survey. Since this February, SJAC has repeatedly briefed the Defense Ministry on its sad plight. This is unusual for SJAC.

According to findings from the survey, 67 PERCENT of its respondents were concerned about the fighter aircraft project's downsizing. The figure shows the serious situation.

Toshikazu Miyabe, an SJAC senior vice president, says: "The way things are going, Japan's aircraft manufacturers will lose their infrastructure that supports the Self-Defense Forces' aircraft. We asked the Defense Ministry to think together about what we should do."

(6) LDP exec implies settlement with minor changes to Futenma relocation plan

RYUKYU SHIMPO (Page 1) (Full)
June 11, 2009

Hiroyuki Hosoda, secretary general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, set forth his views yesterday on the issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station (in Okinawa Prefecture's Ginowan City to a coastal area of Camp Schwab in the prefecture's northern coastal city of Nago), saying: "It's important to consider at least minor changes and reach a settlement with that location (off Nago City's Henoko district) in order to overcome the Futenma issue." With this, Hosoda indicated that the government should comply with the request from Okinawa Gov. Hirokazu Nakaima and other local officials to move the relocation site to an offshore area within the scope of "minor changes" and settle the issue with the understanding of the local community. Hosoda, however, did not specify the scope of "minor changes" in his statement. "That's up to the government to consider," Hosoda said. He was answering a Ryukyu Shimpo reporter's questions in an interview at the LDP headquarters in Tokyo.

Hosoda once negotiated with the U.S. government on the plan to move about 17,000 persons, including the families of Okinawa-based U.S. Marines, to Guam when he was chief cabinet secretary. "Okinawa does not militarily need so many (U.S. troops) in some (security) areas," Hosoda said. He added, "I suggested they sort out those who can be transferred from among the Marines, including families." With this, he explained why the Japanese government proposed transferring U.S.

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Marines from Okinawa to Guam.

Hosoda also stressed: "In the sense of putting together (U.S. military bases in Okinawa), and in terms of public security, I think this is best for Okinawa. In connection with Futenma (airfield's relocation), there are now very unfortunate developments. But it would be better to say we want the Guam relocation to be carried out at an early date."

In addition, Hosoda also touched on why the government first chose an area off the coast of Nago City's Henoko district as the relocation site for Futenma airfield, saying: "There were rumors going around about some candidate locations, such as Shimochhijima Island, Kadena (Air Base's) ammunition depot, and Yomitan airfield. We made various studies. Of course, I claimed that Yomitan would be impossible."

(7) Decision to ratify Cluster Bomb Ban Treaty opens up new horizons for Japan's diplomacy through cooperation with NGO initiatives

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)
June 11, 2009

Yoji Hanaoka, Ken Uzuka, Yasushi Sengoku

The House of Councillors on June 10 passed a bill ratifying the

Convention on Cluster Munitions (Oslo Treaty), which prohibits the use and possession of cluster bombs, the duds of which often end up killing or maiming civilians. This treaty, which is a product of the disarmament talks led by the interested nations and NGOs under the "Oslo Process," offers a new style of disarmament and may open up new horizon for Japan's "peace diplomacy," which has been moribund for a long time. However, the process toward the disposal of cluster bombs has just begun. There are numerous issues that need to be tackled, including the compatibility of this law with the cluster bombs possessed by the U.S. Forces Japan.

Nobuyasu Abe, director of the Center for the Promotion of Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of the Japan Institute of International Affairs and consultant to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), was directly in charge in 1998 as director of MOFA's Arms Control and Science Division when Japan ratified the "Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines." The Mine Ban Treaty, like the Oslo Treaty, was an initiative by interested nations and NGOs. Abe recalls his experience: "There was a big fuss (at that time). Ratification came after a lot of agonizing."

Since landmines, unlike nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, are weapons the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) were expected to use, the impact of the ratification of the treaty was tremendous.

However, Abe observes that with regard to the Oslo Treaty, the government has handled the matter with composure. He says: "Thanks to the learning process at the time of the Mine Ban Treaty, there is now better understanding of the humanitarian standpoint among defense officials."

Abe sees the emergence of a new Japanese diplomatic style in the decision to ratify the Oslo Treaty. He says: "Failure to advocate a position boldly is often criticized. However, disarmament has to do with a balance between the military and the humanitarian viewpoints. Japan has taken action promptly from a position of responsibility

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while also taking practical issues into account."

He particularly noted the cooperation with the NGOs: "In this case, the NGOs showed that if there is a will to make things move, things will move. We count on the NGOs to save the victims and spread the principles of humanitarianism. The government will also cooperate. NGOs, experts, governments, and other parties should all work hard together."

In the area of disarmament, U.S. President Barack Obama has advocated the elimination of nuclear weapons as the ultimate goal, and he is also positive about negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty.

It is said that the next subject of citizen-led disarmament treaties will be depleted uranium shells. Regulation of cyber warfare and biotechnological weapons is also attracting a great deal of attention.

How well Japan can make use of the "new style" it has developed in the present case will be put to the test.

(8) Interview with ex-PM Fukuda: Approval of Cluster Bomb Ban Treaty "matter of course; he ordered a positive stance

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)
June 11, 2009

Ken Uzuka

Former Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, who was the prime minister when Japan gave its approval to the draft "Convention on Cluster Munitions (Oslo Treaty)" in May 2008, gave an interview to Mainichi Shimbun and revealed for the first time that he had ordered the approval of the treaty. He said that he had long been skeptical about the use of cluster bombs since "it is very questionable in terms of humanitarianism and human rights" and that his approval was a "matter of course." He commended disarmament talks by concerned

nations and NGOs and adding, "This will be the inevitable direction," he noted that this will also contribute to nuclear disarmament.

The Oslo Treaty was discussed in disarmament talks by interested nations and NGOs called the "Oslo Process." Participants in a meeting in Dublin, Ireland in late May, 2008, including Japan, approved the treaty.

Before going to the meeting, Fukuda instructed the government representatives to take a positive stance, telling them: "Do not adopt the pathetic stance of Japan making a decision just because the other countries had first decided." He said that he kept in touch with the officials in Dublin and "in the end, made the decision based on our predetermined policy." He said that he confirmed with U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) at that time that they had "no objections".

Fukuda also issued orders to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs "not just once" to coordinate views on three aspects: (1) security issues; (2) diplomatic issues with regard to international public opinion; and (3) relations with USFJ.

Cluster bombs are envisioned to be used to attack enemies landing on

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Japan, but Fukuda expressed skepticism about the basic assumption: "They will not fall in line and turn up in hordes," and, "Can we really use them, because they have become very questionable on humanitarian grounds?"

Fukuda also expressed his hopes that the momentum created by signing the Oslo Treaty "will also contribute to (discussions about) the futility of possessing nuclear arms and how to prevent nuclear proliferation."

Commenting on the U.S., which is not a signatory to the Oslo Treaty, Fukuda said that, "If Japan is going to engage in disarmament, it will have to tell the USFJ." As to calling on the USFJ not to use cluster bombs, he said: "Can we tie the hands of the USFJ, which defends Japan? We need to look at this realistically."

(9) Winning U.S. understanding problem in disarmament; unsure about methods, funding for discarding cluster bombs

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Slightly abridged)

The Oslo Treaty presents Japan with various issues.

The first issue is relations with the U.S. forces in Japan (USFJ). Since the U.S. is not a signatory to the treaty, there is a contradiction in that its forces will continue to possess cluster bombs in Japan.

A senior Ministry of Foreign Affairs official defends the USFJ's use of cluster bombs, stating, "This is necessary for achieving the mission of the Japan-U.S. security alliance," but goes to great lengths to dispel concerns: "They will only be used under exceptional circumstances, and humanitarian concerns will also be taken into account."

The treaty allows a certain extent of "military cooperation and actions" with non-signatory states. Therefore, the Self-Defense Forces and private companies will be able to transport cluster bombs during joint exercises with the USFJ. When queried about joint exercises using cluster bombs at the House of Councillors Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense, Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada would only say: "There are no plans for such exercises at this point." He avoided answering the question of whether there is any plan to ask the USFJ not to use cluster bombs. This illustrated the "limitations" of disarmament under the Japan-U.S. relationship.

The U.S. has decided not to use cluster bombs with a failure rate of over 1 percent beyond 2018. President Barack Obama has also signed a budget bill in March with provisions banning the export of cluster bombs with high failure rates, showing a certain extent of

understanding (of the Oslo effort). Japan, on its part, will need to come up with concrete measures in support of its stance. Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone says: "We will start with what is feasible, bearing in mind the United States' position."

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Defense (MOD), which does not have any knowhow on this matter, has begun to research methods for discarding cluster bombs. Right now, it possesses four types of cluster bombs (worth some 27.6 billion yen). Since the government's policy is to dispose of them within eight years of the Oslo Treaty taking effect, it has allotted 200 million yen for the research of disposal methods in the FY09 budget.

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According to the MOD's Arms Division, which is in charge of the disposal program, the disposal procedures are expected to be outsourced to bomb and explosive manufacturers in Japan. The division explains that, "The big goal is to complete the disposal within eight years, but we will not know whether it is possible to finish sooner until the research is done."

(10) Defense spending must be set at 1.5 PERCENT of GDP

SANKEI (Page 7) (Excerpts)
June 11, 2009

Atsuyuki Sassa, first generation director of the Cabinet Security Affairs Office

To the public's disappointment, the first party-heads debate between Prime Minister Taro Aso and Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Yukio Hatoyama centered on the futile topics of "fraternity" and "Nishimatsu Construction Co.," with little regard to the state's basic missions of security, national defense and foreign policy. Of the 46 minutes, they spent only 2 minutes and 17 seconds discussing the growing threat from North Korea. Recently, the North has been brazenly using brinksmanship techniques, such as preparing for launching an improved Taepodong missile and short-range missiles and intimidating the UN Security Council that was discussing possible sanctions on the reclusive country.

The option of possessing an enemy-base strike capability has suddenly surfaced in national defense discussions, following the pointless Aso-Hatoyama debate.

From here on, the discussion is likely to head for the introduction of cruise missiles, such as the Tomahawk, and air tankers. But given the current framework of defense spending, those options seem only pie in the sky. Instead, the government is advised to swiftly expand the budget's framework to improve the missile defense (MD) system now being implemented.

Government agencies have begun making budgetary requests for fiscal 2010. This is not the time to engage in a vain fraternity-vs.-Nishimatsu wrangle. In the same column in the newspaper's April 21 issue, I urged the government to abolish the Basic Policy for National Defense of 1957 and to adopt instead a new basic policy proclaiming autonomous national defense, missile defense, and international contributions. This time around, I advise the government to have the Security Council of Japan swiftly discuss an increase in defense spending, include it in the budgetary request after a cabinet decision, and set the framework of defense spending at 1.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) for defending the country on our own.

(11) Koizumi children having difficulties

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
Evening, June 10, 2009

The House of Representatives general election is looming. The election gives voters the chance to choose the party they think should take the reins of government. Now that many of the so-called "Koizumi children," first-term lawmakers of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), who were elected in the 2005 House of

Representatives election for the first time to the Diet, are in a difficult situation. The Aso cabinet has been suffering from low support rates. Former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi will retire from the political world. What will the "Koizumi children" do?

The LDP has decided not to give preferential treatment to its first-term lawmakers in the proportional representation segment.

Of the 83 "children," 47 lawmakers were elected in the proportional representation election. Out of those 47, 14 ran only for the proportional representation seats. Political analyst Atsuo Ito calls them "part-time lawmakers." Those lawmakers are in the most difficult situation. Taku Otsuka, 35, who is representing the No. 9 district in Saitama Prefecture, and Keisuke Suzuki, 32, the representative of the No. 7 district in Kanagawa Prefecture are the only lawmakers who are expected to secure the LDP's official endorsement. Although Fukuyo Nakamori ran in the mayoral election of Saitama City, she was defeated. Kuniko Inoguchi, 57, and some other members plan to run only for the proportional representation segment.

Taizo Sugimura, 29, who was defeated in a competition to win the LDP's endorsement in a single-seat constituency, decided on June 4 not to seek another term.

Junichiro Yasui, 59, elected in the Tokyo bloc in the proportional representation system, said: "The whirlwind of Koizumi was created by the times, not by Koizumi himself. There is nothing to worry about if our perception of the times is right."

The LDP members, who were once defeated in the single-seat elections but were elected under the proportional representation system, face a tough situation. Kotaro Nagasaki, 40, who failed to get the party's nomination, appears to be running for the No. 2 district seat in Yamanashi Prefecture. Yukari Sato, 47, said: "I have been working frantically." In the previous Lower House election, she was fielded in the No. 1 district in Gifu Prefecture, as an "assassin" for Seiko Noda, currently state minister of consumer affairs. She changed her constituency from Gifu to the No. 5 district in Tokyo in February last year, when Noda got the LDP's official endorsement. She was raised in the No. 5 district. However, she is experiencing more crucial campaigning in Tokyo than Gifu, because she has neither a list of supporters nor her own support group. She travels back and forth between her office and Tokyo's political battleground of Nagatacho five times every day. She only gets three to four hours of sleep every day.

The LDP secured 296 seats in the last Lower House election. In the three general elections prior to the previous race, the party obtained 233 to 239 seats. "If this is the LDP's real strength, the LDP will be able to add about 60 seats to the 233 or 239 seats. Many of the Koizumi children were defeated in the single-seat elections. In theory, the possibility is high that they will fail to be elected," said Ito.

Hiromi Miura, an election planner, said: "Only ten percent of the Koizumi children will be reelected. Since they got their Diet seats in the whirlwind that Koizumi brought, they will be blown away if they do nothing."

ZUMWALT